Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1 - 10 (Canceled)

11.   (New) An image forming apparatus comprising:

first selecting means for selecting whether image quality is low or high;

expanding means for expanding image data of an original image read from an original in bitmap data of one page of the original, the image data corresponding to a predetermined one of a variety of colors;

distinguishing means for distinguishing whether the original image is a highly detailed image or not by an amount of the bitmap data;

determining means for determining whether or not an image of sufficient image quality can be formed when an image distinguished by the distinguishing means is compressed by a compression method and a compression rate corresponding to the image quality selected by the first selecting means;

guiding means for, when the determining means determines that the image of sufficient image quality cannot be formed, interrupting forming of the image, and guiding an operator and displaying a warning message;

second selecting means for selecting whether or not the forming of the image with a high compression rate is continued; and

setting means for setting an encoding method suitable for a low compression rate when the forming of the image with the low compression rate is selected by the second selecting means, while maintaining the compression method and the compression rate corresponding to the image quality selected by the first selecting means when the forming of the image with the high compression rate is selected to continue by the second selecting means.

12.   (New) The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the distinguishing means distinguishes whether the original image is a highly detailed image or not by the amount of the bitmap data exceeds a predetermined value.

13.   (New) The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the distinguishing means distinguishes whether the original image is a highly detailed image or not based on whether the original image is determined to contain character strings or whether the original image is determined to contain photographic images.

14.   (New) An image forming apparatus comprising:

a first selecting unit configured to select whether image quality is low or high;

an expanding unit configured to expand image data of an original image read from an original in bitmap data of one page of the original, the image data corresponding to a predetermined one of a variety of colors;

a distinguishing unit configured to distinguish whether the original image is a highly detailed image or not by an amount of the bitmap data;

a determining unit configured to determine whether or not an image of sufficient image quality can be formed when an image distinguished by the distinguishing unit is compressed by a compression method and a compression rate corresponding to the image quality selected by the first selecting unit;

a guiding unit configured to, when the determining unit determines that the image of sufficient image quality cannot be formed, interrupt forming of the image, and to guide an operator and displaying a warning message;

a second selecting unit configured to select whether or not the forming of the image with a high compression rate is continued; and

a setting unit configured to set an encoding method suitable for a low compression rate when the forming of the image with the low compression rate is selected by the second selecting unit, while maintaining the compression method and the compression rate corresponding to the image quality selected by the first selecting unit when the forming of the image with the high compression rate is selected to continue by the second selecting unit.

15.   (New) The apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the distinguishing unit distinguishes whether the original image is a highly detailed image or not by the amount of the bitmap data exceeds a predetermined value.

16.   (New) The apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the distinguishing unit distinguishes whether the original image is a highly detailed image or not based on whether the original image is determined to contain character strings or whether the original image is determined to contain photographic images.

17.   (New) An image forming method comprising:

selecting whether image quality is low or high;

expanding image data of an original image read from an original in bitmap data of one page of the original, the image data corresponding to a predetermined one of a variety of colors;

distinguishing whether the original image is a highly detailed image or not by an amount of the bitmap data;

determining whether or not an image of sufficient image quality can be formed when an image distinguished by the distinguishing step is compressed by a compression method and a compression rate corresponding to the image quality selected by the selecting step;

guiding, when the determining step determines that the image of sufficient image quality cannot be formed, interrupting forming of the image, and guiding an operator and displaying a warning message;

selecting whether or not the forming of the image with a high compression rate is continued; and

setting an encoding method suitable for a low compression rate when the forming of the image with the low compression rate is selected by the second selecting step, while maintaining the compression method and the compression rate corresponding to the image quality selected by the first selecting step when the forming of the image with the high compression rate is selected to continue by the second selecting step.

18.   (New) The method according to claim 17, wherein the distinguishing step distinguishes whether the original image is a highly detailed image or not by the amount of the bitmap data exceeds a predetermined value.

19.   (New) The method according to claim 17, wherein the distinguishing step distinguishes whether the original image is a highly detailed image or not based on whether the original image is determined to contain character strings or whether the original image is determined to contain photographic images.